DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 215 660 IR 009 886

AUTHOR Maloney, Dennis M.; And Others
TITLE Audience Awareness and Information Management for Expanding Behavioral Programs.
PUB DATE Aug 81
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (89th, Los Angeles, CA, August 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Audiences; Audiovisual Aids; *Behavior Modification; *Information Dissemination; Information Networks; *Mental Health Programs; Models; Publications
IDENTIFIERS *Boys Town NE; Printed Materials

ABSTRACT

This description of the systematic approach to dissemination of behaviorally oriented materials developed at Boys Town focuses on the Teaching-Family Model for residential treatment and the development of products to transmit information about the model to a variety of audiences in formats appropriate to the particular groups. Information techniques such as the printed word, slide presentations, audiovisual tapes, and 16mm movies have been used to develop flyers, brochures, magazine articles, journal articles, textbook chapters, in-house manuals, newsletters, conference presentations, conferences, training tapes, and movies for civic groups. Identification of specific audiences for each product has shown that most of these materials have been designed primarily for program-related audiences (e.g., trainers, evaluators), with far fewer publications aimed at other colleagues, and fewer yet for the general lay audience. However, distribution of program-related information has increased significantly since the establishment of the new unit in late 1978. A reference list is provided, and the appended graphs contain descriptions of the three types of dissemination (information, knowledge, and program) used at Boys Town and latest available figures on publication distribution. (MER)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED215660

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

AUDIENCE AWARENESS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT FOR EXPANDING BEHAVIORAL PROGRAMS

by

Dennis M. Maloney
Dean L. Fixsen
Elery L. Phillips

Presented at the Eighty-ninth
Annual Meeting of the
American Psychological Association
Los Angeles

August, 1981

IR009 886

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Dennis M. Maloney

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ABSTRACT

The Teaching-Family Model has expanded from one behavioral treatment home for delinquents in 1967 to over 150 such homes by 1981. Along with the growth of research, evaluation, and training programs has come the increased need for written and audiovisual materials and information. In 1978, a unit at Boys Town was formed to more systematically design and distribute such behaviorally-oriented information according to reader and user needs.

A preliminary retrospective examination of Boys Town materials that were developed between 1976 and 1980 showed that there had been a marked emphasis on producing materials for only one of three possible audiences. Further, information distribution data from 1979-1980 showed a 120% increase in the amount of information distributed.

This paper discusses the systematic approach to dissemination of behaviorally-oriented materials that is being developed at Boys Town in which specific audiences are selected for planned publications. Also, management procedures are presented for distributing hundreds of copies of program materials per month on a continual basis.

AUDIENCE AWARENESS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT FOR EXPANDING BEHAVIORAL PROGRAMS

Applied behavioral research has generated considerable knowledge on the "lawfulness" of human behavior, but assessment of the most effective treatment for specific behavioral problems remains a difficult task (Azrin, 1977). One of the crucial needs is to identify technique effectiveness through outcome evaluations and careful process evaluations that clearly specify just how programs operate to produce the long-term results.

For those behavioral intervention programs that are stable enough over time to permit outcome evaluations, encouraging results raise a further question for applied programs; namely, how can the program be made available to more clients? The entire process involving provision of a program to more clients, usually at multiple locales, is referred to as program dissemination (Maloney, Fixsen, and Phillips, 1980, 1981). Program dissemination should only take place after initial program development, staff training, and program evaluation efforts have indicated that the behavioral program is benefiting clients and, in general, serving some identifiable society need (Lalley and Shah, 1976).

Program Dissemination

Dissemination strategies vary, but a survey of seventeen standardized intervention programs revealed that the two most effective but least used of eleven dissemination techniques involved demonstration and training centers as well as long-term training (Paine, 1979).

In addition to the significant resources of time, staff, and funds required by these techniques, a broad range of support materials (brochures, manuals, audiovisual aids, etc.) must exist for such training centers to function. Five other information approaches (non-print media, commercial publications, publications list, in-house materials, and professional publications) were listed along with training centers among the possible types of dissemination tehcniques.

Information Dissemination

With information so favored a dissemination technique, either by itself or as a support for another technique, management of information dissemination has become increasingly important to behavioral programs that have reached the stage of program dissemination. The Teaching-Family Model for residential treatment has been at this stage for several years (Fixsen, Maloney, Maloney, and Phillips, 1978) and serves as the focus for this paper.

Although psychologists have been familiar with problems in communication between client and therapist (Shectman, 1979), communication on a broader scale--as in program dissemination--is a recent phenomena. Nevertheless, some of the communication obstacles are similar: the problem of information overload; the need to recognize that perceptions and viewpoints vary so widely among consumer groups that the same printed word may mean different things to different readers; the responsibility to not raise consumer expectations too high; and the need to construct information vehicles that permit feedback to program developers so that the program itself could be modified by consumer reaction to information.

Information Management at Boys Town

In the Fall of 1978, a specific administrative unit was organized in the Youth Care Department at Boys Town to address information dissemination needs. Management of information became more necessary as the Teaching-Family Model was actively disseminated to various regions of the country to serve new populations.

Since the model is behavioral and many components are based on behavioral research findings, specificity is a hallmark of the model. Specificity has required that information techniques such as the printed word, slide presentations, audiovisual tapes, and 16 mm. movies be developed. These techniques are used to construct flyers, brochures, magazine articles, journal articles, textbooks chapters, in-house manuals, newsletters, conference presentations, conferences, training tapes, and movies for civic groups.

These products are used to transmit information to a variety of audiences, most of whom need different types of information presented in different formats. Audiences for the Teaching-Family Model include the general lay audience, professional colleagues, community members near Teaching-Family group homes, site developers who administer regional clusters of Teaching-Family homes, the training, evaluation, and consultation staff at a site, the Teaching-Parent couples who operate the homes, and the clients who reside in the homes.

Audience Targeting

Identification of specific audiences for each product has shown

that most behaviorally oriented materials have been designed by Teaching-Family proponents primarily for program-related audiences (trainers, evaluators, etc.). Far fewer publications have been aimed at other colleagues (e.g., through journal articles), and fewer yet for the general lay audience. A retrospective examination conducted in June, 1980, showed that of behaviorally-oriented materials developed at Boys Town from 1976-1980, 64% were for program staff, 30% were for other colleagues, and 6% were designed for the general audience. This finding has made it possible to plan publications for the future according to the type of audience deemed most relevant to supporting goals of the expanding Teaching-Family Model.

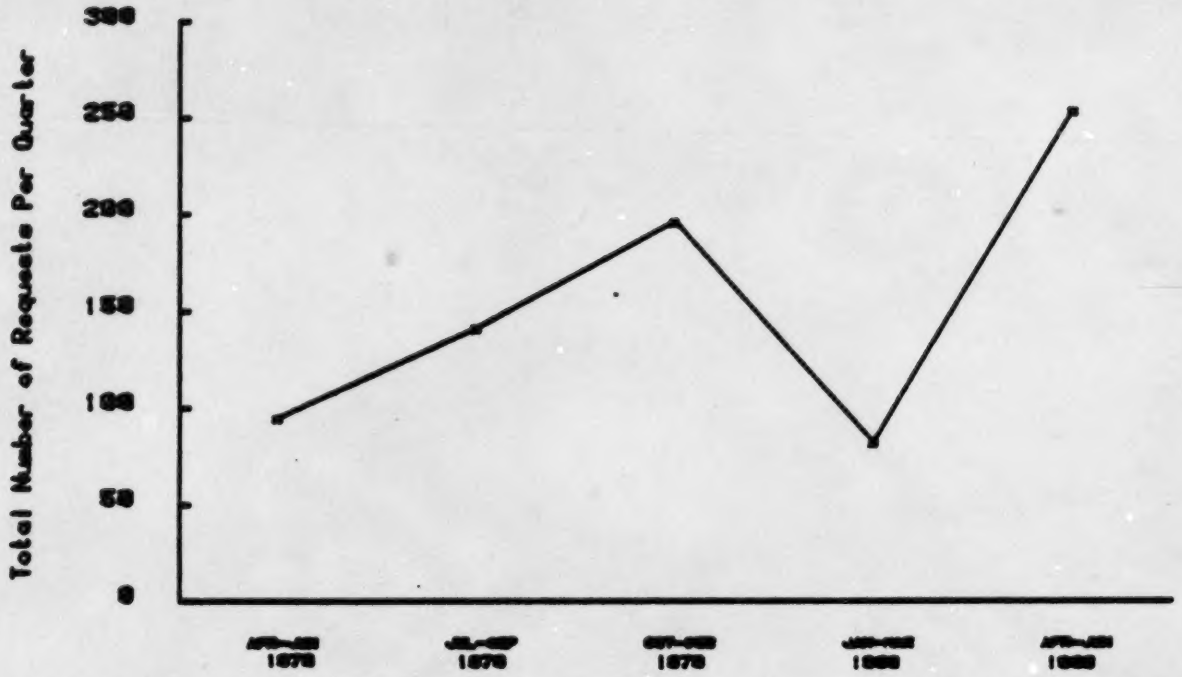
Information Distribution

Finally, the distribution of program-related information has increased significantly since establishment of the new unit at Boys Town in late 1978. Data shown in Figure 1 for April, 1979-June, 1980, show an increase from an average of 30 requests to Boys Town per month for behavioral materials to 80 per month, and from about 180 individual publications mailed out per month to about 400 copies sent out per month (Phillips, Baron, Black, Coughlin, Fixsen, and Maloney, 1980). A preliminary examination of these increases suggests that various "critical incidents" (e.g., specific notices, an order form) may account for the 120% increase in distribution of materials.

The graphs that follow the References section contain descriptions of the three types of dissemination (information, knowledge, and program) used at Boys Town and latest available figures on the amount of publications disseminated.

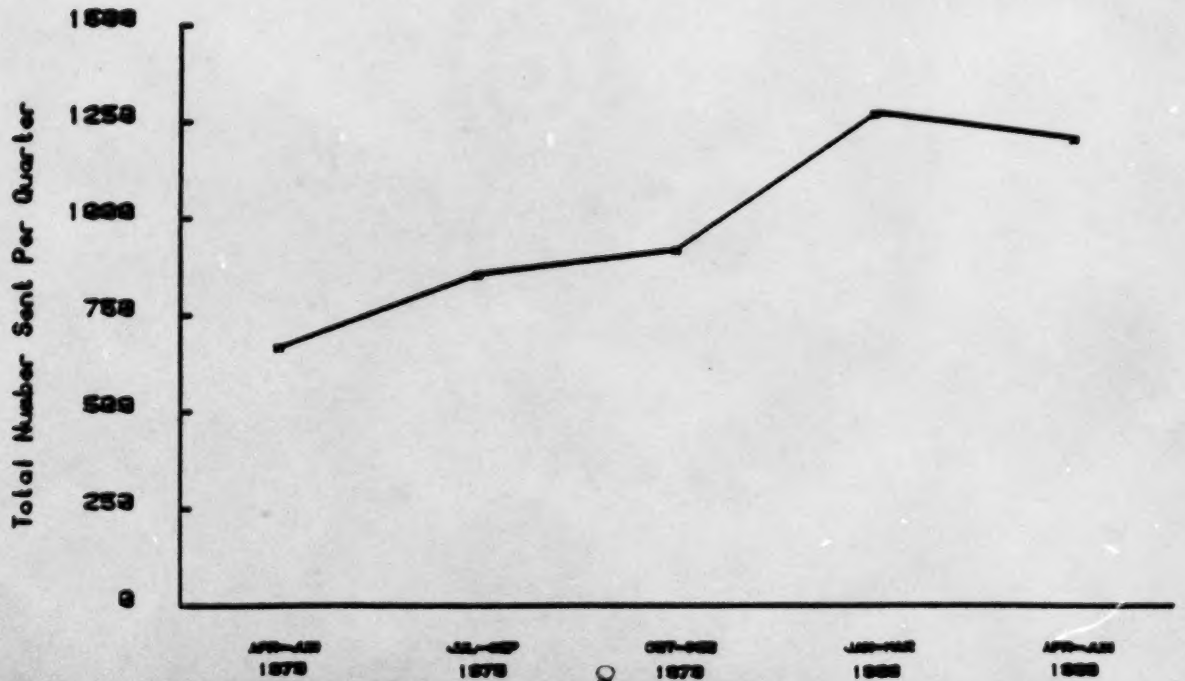
GRAPH I

REQUESTS FOR PUBLICATIONS FROM YOUTH CARE



GRAPH II

PUBLICATIONS SENT BY YOUTH CARE



REFERENCES

Azrin, N.H. A strategy for applied research: Learning based but outcome oriented. American Psychologist, 1977, 32, 140-149.

Fixsen, D.L., Maloney, D.M., Maloney, K.B., and Phillips, E.L. Making research useful: it takes more than a better mousetrap. Paper presented to the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis, Chicago, May 1978.

Lalley, T.L., and Shah, S.A. Achievement Place: The NIMH (National Institute of Mental Health) perspective. Paper presented at the 84th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., 1976.

Maloney, D.M., Fixsen, D.L., and Phillips, E.L. Program Dissemination: You can't get there from here. Paper presented at the Sixth Annual Western Regional Conference on Humanistic Behavioral Approaches, Las Vegas, March 1980.

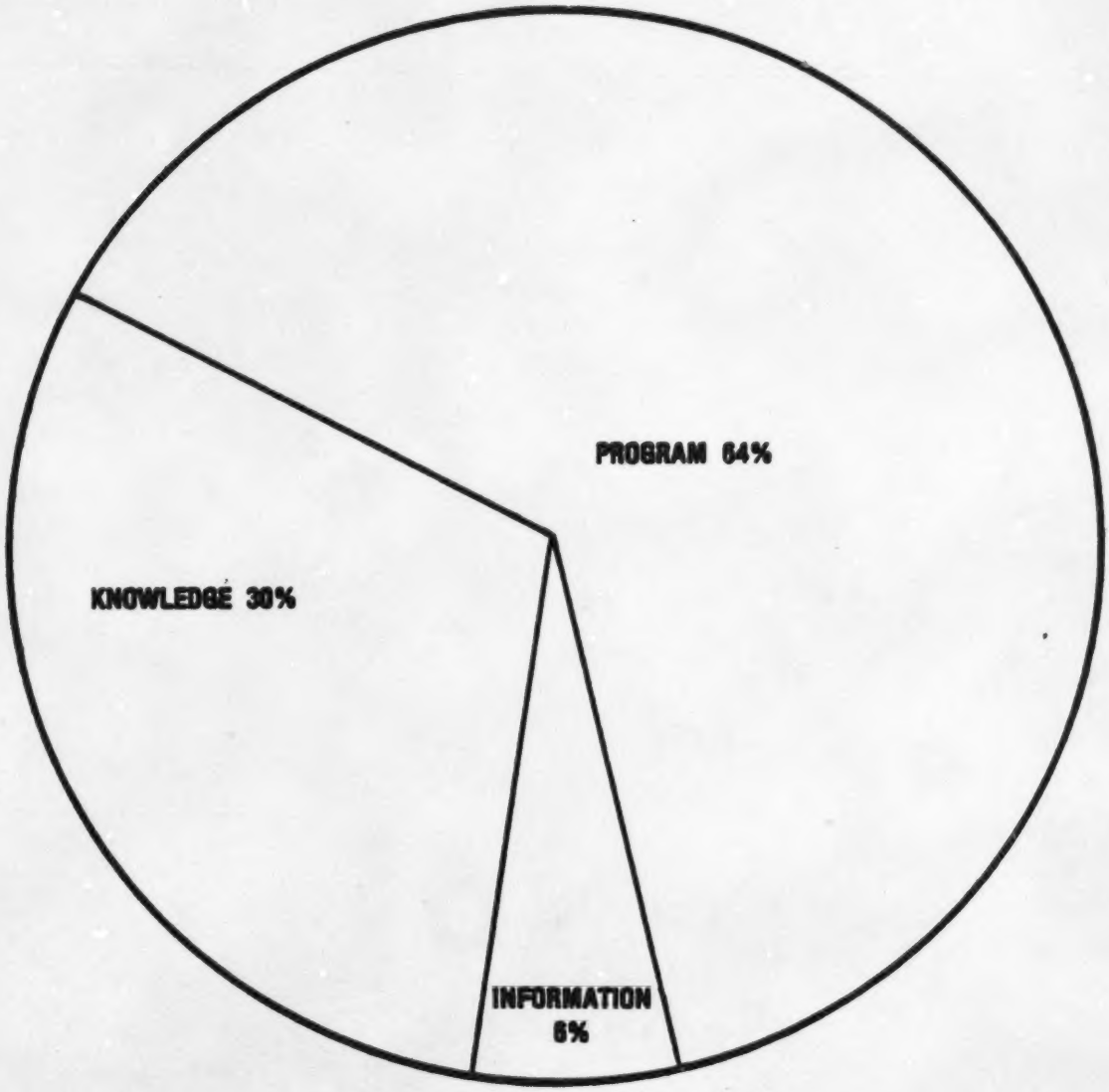
Maloney, D.M., Fixsen, D.L., and Phillips, E.L. The Teaching-Family Model: research and dissemination in a service program. Children and Youth Services Review, 1981, 3, 343-355.

Paine, S.C. Standardized intervention programs: Preliminary data on descriptive characteristics, methods of dissemination, and problems of implementation. Paper presented at the Fifth Annual Convention of the Association for Behavior Analysis, Dearborn, Michigan, June 1979.

Phillips, E.L., Baron, R.L., Black, D.D., Coughlin, D.D., Fixsen, D. L., and Maloney, D.M. Advances in Youth Care. Boys Town, Nebraska: Father Flanagan's Boys' Home, 1980.

Shectman, F. Problems in communicating psychological understanding. American Psychologist, 1979, 34, 781-790.

TYPES OF DISSEMINATION



Percentage represents portion of 36 publications disseminated by Teaching-Family staff at Boys Town from January, 1976-June, 1980

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Target Audience:
GENERAL and COMMUNITY CONTACTS

Goals:
- Make aware that program exists
- Reduce opposition to home
- Increase support (zoning, funding, referrals)

Focus On	Style	Format	Distribution
Treatment Approach	Conversational Language	Brief (1-10 pgs.)	Large Press Run
		Self-Published	Agency Mailing List
Youths	No Jargon	Smaller Than 8½'' x 11''	By Homes & Sites
		Texture Paper	
Family Life	Eighth Grade Reading Level	Lightweight, Bound	At Community Meetings
	Positive Photos	Multiple Colors	

Impact on Serving More Youths: Minimal

KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

Target Audience: BEHAVIORAL SCIENTISTS and THERAPISTS

Goals:
- Develop & Maintain professional credibility
- Describe program innovations
- Expand behavioral science and therapy

Focus On	Style	Format	Distribution
Technology: Treatment Training Consultation Evaluation Research Management	Technical Language Jargon Graduate School Reading Level Graphs, Charts, Tables	Varied Length (1-50 pgs.) Published by Others (follow their formats)	Circulation Controlled by Journal/Textbook Publisher Reprints By Homes and Sites at Special Request

Impact on Serving More Youths: Minimal to Moderate

PROGRAM DISSEMINATION [12]

Target Audience:

TEACHING-PARENTS, TRAINERS, CONSULTANTS, EVALUATORS, PROGRAM MANAGERS, & SITE DEVELOPERS

Goals:
- Serve more youths with more homes
- Ensure quality of treatment for youths
- Ensure quality of staff training

Focus On	Style	Format	Distribution
Completeness & Detail of Treatment Techniques	Conversational & Technical Language	Varied Length (1-1000 pgs.)	Small Press Runs
Completeness & Detail of Training Information	Some Jargon	Self-Published	Limited to Hired Staff
	College Level Reading		In Workshops & as Program References
Completeness & Detail of Program Management Information	Graphs, Charts, Tables	Usually Not "Finished Product"	Looseleaf Manuals

Impact on Serving More Youths: Maximum

PUBLICATIONS DISSEMINATED